

pre-existing conditions, and millions of young Americans will be able to stay on their parent's healthcare plans until they are 26.

The function of government is to make life better for all Americans, regardless of socioeconomic background. The Affordable Care Act will improve the quality of life for working families, children and seniors. It will also strengthen our economy.

President Obama is to be congratulated for his indispensable leadership in achieving the goal of affordable quality healthcare for all Americans, a goal we Democrats have been fighting for more than 75 years.

It is a fact of life that individuals do not have a choice in participating in the health care market. Eventually we will all get sick, and need medical attention. This bill requires every American to take control of their own coverage, and be responsible for themselves.

I am proud to have voted in favor of this legislation two years ago, and prouder still to have stood on the steps of the Supreme Court today to celebrate the success of having the Affordable Care Act upheld. Today's ruling is a momentous occasion and a true victory for Americans across the nation.

REGARDING H. RES. 711

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2012

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today, I voted against the House Privileged Resolution holding Attorney General Eric Holder in contempt of Congress. Never in the 225 years of the House has there been a vote to hold any Cabinet member in contempt, and I will never vote to support such partisan legislation that's nothing short of a race to the bottom for this House.

There are serious questions that remain to be answered about the Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) program, infamously known as "Fast and Furious," started in 2005 under the Bush administration. The Department of Justice is in the midst of such an investigation, but today's vote will do nothing to further that inquiry, and will instead slow and muddle the process.

The charges by Chairman ISSA of a conspiratorial effort by the Obama administration to strengthen gun control laws—are completely unsubstantiated and laughable on their face. When that became apparent, the Chairman turned to blatant political tactics, culminating in a Contempt of Congress resolution that was rushed to the floor.

The Republicans and the National Rifle Association have created a web of constraints that make it almost impossible to restrict these dangerous practices that prompted the program in the first place.

Fast and Furious was a flawed operation. Those flaws, however, parallel the biased, politicized investigation run by House Oversight & Investigations Committee Republicans. During the Committee's 16-month investigation,

they refused all Democratic requests for witnesses and hearings. The investigation was closed to the public.

The Republican refusal to even allow those directly involved with the Fast & Furious program to testify before the Oversight Committee portrays their political motivations, not the facts, nor the thousands of innocent civilians in Mexico and on the border who have lost their lives from heavily-armed drug cartels.

Attorney General Holder testified before the Committee nine times. The Department of Justice provided over 700 thousand documents to the House Oversight & Investigations Committee. Despite this broad cooperation, my Republican colleagues kept moving the goal posts, making it impossible to meet their demands. There was no end in sight. President Obama's decision to assert executive privilege was a well-reasoned decision to stop playing the Republicans political game.

I believe deeply in the fundamental responsibility of Congress to provide oversight and accountability for the executive branch. We only weaken that authority by engaging in this partisan stunt Congress and the American people deserve better. We should reject this effort and do our job to find out what really happened.

IN MEMORY OF BISHOP ROBERT C. JEFFERSON

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2012

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor the memory of a pillar in the Sunnyside community in Houston, Texas, Bishop Robert C. Jefferson, Pastor of the Cullen Missionary Baptist Church. With exceptional dedication, Bishop Jefferson served his community and advocated for the betterment of society.

Bishop Jefferson was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana on January 12, 1942. He accepted his calling into the gospel ministry in March 1976 and was ordained at Mount Horeb Baptist Church in Houston under the pastoral leadership of the late Reverend Johnnie Jones. In March 1977, he founded Cullen Missionary Baptist Church and faithfully served there for the rest of his life.

A champion of the downtrodden and underserved, Bishop Jefferson founded and was active on a host of community organizations. He was a Founding Member of Ministers Against Crime, an organization that is active in issues involving inequities and civil rights in the Greater Houston Area. He was also the Founder of Sunnyside Up, Inc., a community development project; Founder/President of A Brand New City, Inc.; Founder/President of the Cullen Christian Child Development Center; the former Second Vice President and Director of Religious Affairs of the NAACP Houston Branch; and a former member of the Houston Independent School District Board.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, Bishop Jefferson will be dearly missed by his wife, Myrtle, grand-

children, great-grandchildren, as well as his four daughters, Lola, Vanessa, Lisa and Robertine. He will be remembered in the City of Houston as a dedicated community leader and a principled man of God.

A TRIBUTE TO DR. SWAMY SUNKARA

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2012

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Swamy Sunkara was born in India. He graduated from Andhra Medical College and King George Hospital. Named after Dr. Swamy Naidu, Dr. Sunkara was a great surgeon, philanthropist, athlete, swordsman, and horseman of national level. He is also from a family of physicians and soccer players of international reputation.

As a young student leader Dr. Sunkara volunteered in various natural disasters including one in Divi Andhra Pradesh, where he worked for several weeks directly under Mother Theresa. She always had kind words about him when she visited that area.

Dr. Sunkara served as surgeon, and then trained as an anesthesiologist in Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago. He completed the postgraduate course of diploma in anesthesiology from University of West Indies. He served as a social worker at St. James Infirmary in Montego Bay, Jamaica from 1979 to 1981 and served at the Prince Elizabeth Hospital for destitute children in Port of Spain, Trinidad from 1981 to 1987. He gave free anesthesia for surgeries of children with cleft palates, club-foot, and other congenital abnormalities. Dr. Sunkara worked as a volunteer physician at Trinidad and Tobago Sports Medicine and received letters of commendation in Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago for his work and dedication.

Dr. Sunkara migrated to the United States in 1988. He successfully completed the Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Health, Masters in Public Health with double majors in International Health and Emergency Medicine. He served as a published researcher and volunteer in Children's Cancer Study Group at New York Medical College, and Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla, New York. He worked as a volunteer Emergency Medical Technician at both the Ossining Volunteer Ambulance Corps and Pleasantville Volunteer Ambulance Corps. Dr. Sunkara received the Best Volunteer award from Westchester County Executive for the year '88-89 and received Best Volunteer award from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of Newark New Jersey in 1989. Dr. Sunkara also served as one of the Uncles for foster children of Richard Allen Center on Life in New York City.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Dr. Swamy Naidu Sunkara for his extraordinary contributions to New York City's medical community.